

Agenda item: FC 147/22

WOUGHTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Full Council

Monday 12th December 2022

PURPOSE OF REPORT:

To update council on budget preparations and suggestions in preparation for formal agreement in January.

RECOMMENDATION:

- 1. That council notes the updated budget sheet.**
- 2. That council acknowledges the ever-changing nature of the budget preparations, and that more information is needed prior to being able to finalise the budget, especially regarding the landscape contract.**
- 3. That council considers the long-term impact of any decisions made regarding the precept, noting the LCTRS situation and eroding levels of reserves.**
- 4. That the suggestion from Operations Committee of a percentage increase was NOT agreed and was postponed until greater clarity was reached.**
- 5. That the Full Council meeting in January must produce an agreed level of precept so as to inform the principal authority.**

MAIN ISSUES AND CONSIDERATIONS:

The is the third budget that has come to council for consideration and, as with previous versions, this one includes some additional updates. These include more accurate figures for staffing costs (reduced significantly following work from the Accounts Officer on national insurance contributions) and some, but not full, information about the likely budgets for landscaping. There is also some potential cost savings in key areas, but these decisions have yet to be ratified (e.g. a move to a different phone system, which will save around £3k per year).

This budget brings in some level of 'balance', without any level of safety net. With the current issues around inflation, the potential new Landscape contract, wage increases and the impending loss of LCTRS, building a level of saving into the budget is key – it is advised that the council considers a budget that includes both full cost coverage AND a level of reserves security.

Discussions at other meetings have included the real threat that inflation brings – other local councils at a district and unitary level have seen millions in savings eaten by the impact and at WCC we have seen costs outstrip income in key areas (e.g. landscape contract increase below the increased cost of wages, let alone fuel, repairs, running costs, etc.).

In addition, the current fuel cap that has seen the worst impacts of the current increases held off, will come to an end at the start of the new financial year. With this playing a significant part of the running costs for all our buildings, increases will put further pressure on budgets.

This budget places LCTRS as a reducing over three years – a loss of £60k in year one and then further reductions of £50k for the following two years. In the event that this is lost in one hit (distinctly

possible, if not probable, given pressures on the principal authority), this will significantly impact on the council, leading to reserves at a dangerously low level (just over £100k) – this would mean removing money from the long term savings scheme (CCLA), which is intended to be long term security.

These issues should be balanced against impact on residents and whilst increases are low in monetary terms (a 5% increase equates to less than £1 a month for the majority of residents), for many within the parish, any increase would place additional pressure on already stretched budgets. Whilst inflation is significantly higher than any suggested increase (food inflation noted at 12.4% this month), these are considerations that council should include within discussions.

The full range of options can be found by changing the cells within the budget sheet – this will be provided on the evening of the meeting so that all variations can be seen and considered.

The full exploration of the service provided will not be able to be completed prior to the final budget setting, but will continue and can be considered as part of the delivery of services next year (and beyond) with any variations included in any reforecasting.

STAFFING IMPLICATIONS:

None.

OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

None.

BACKGROUND PAPERS:

Budget update December 2022.

AUTHOR

Steve McNay – Council Manager

2022/23 Budget with 3 year projection				
	2022/23 agreed	2022/23 Sept	2023/24	
EXPENDITURE				
Affiliations	£ 5,100.00	£ 5,100.00	£ 5,100.00	Realistic
Professional Services	£ 3,000.00	£ 4,000.00	£ 4,000.00	Increased, due to Scribe and Worknest
Audit Fees	£ 3,677.00	£ 2,500.00	£ 2,500.00	Reduced, due to move from RBS
Capital Loan Repayment	£ 26,818.00	£ 26,818.00	£ 26,818.00	Fixed
Community Events (previously Carnival)	£ 10,000.00	£ 5,000.00	£ 5,000.00	To be agreed - reduced in 2022/23
CLIR Ward Initiatives Fund	£ 3,800.00	£ 3,800.00	£ 3,800.00	Maintained at current level
Dog & Litter Bin Costs	£ 10,000.00	£ 8,000.00	£ 8,000.00	Small reduction
Meeting Costs	£ 2,000.00	£ 2,000.00	£ 2,000.00	
Communities and Environment Fund	£ 12,000.00	£ 12,000.00	£ 12,000.00	To be agreed - used in 2022/23
Grant Aid - Res Associations	£ 3,500.00	£ 2,500.00	£ 3,500.00	Maintained at current level
Insurance Inc Vans	£ 8,250.00	£ 8,620.00	£ 9,000.00	Reflects actual costs
Meeting Places (Costs)	£ 40,000.00	£ 68,000.00	£ 48,000.00	Increased due to energy costs and other issues
Member Allowances and Expenses	£ 20,000.00	£ 20,000.00	£ 26,000.00	
Newsletters, Websites and Communications	£ 8,000.00	£ 10,000.00	£ 5,000.00	Reduced to 2 annually - online option
HQ - Building Costs (regulars)	£ 13,310.00	£ 20,000.00	£ 20,000.00	Increased from Stationary
Vehicles	£ 9,630.00	£ 7,000.00	£ 9,630.00	Reduced if landscape contract, but with investmer
Branding (also to include uniforms)	£ 3,000.00	£ 2,000.00	£ 1,000.00	Branding on uniforms - should be limited
Stationary and Amenities and services - HQ	£ 10,395.00	£ 4,000.00	£ 4,000.00	Savings into HQ costs
I.T (previously included broadband and Members IT)	£ 31,900.00	£ 42,900.00	£ 31,900.00	Potential for savings
Organisational Costs Total	£ 224,380.00	£ 254,238.00	£ 227,248.00	
Staffing Costs - added 2% across the board + increments				
Pension costs (20/21 = 22.1%, 21/22 = 23.6%, 22/23 = 25.1%)	£ 119,574.60	£ 119,574.60		
Employers NI Costs (PAYE)	£ 141,886.86	£ 141,886.86		
HQ Staffing	£ 107,808.05	£ 107,808.05	£ 188,668.06	All incl (pensions and EmpNI)
Youth Staffing	£ 68,106.85	£ 68,106.85	£ 97,741.10	All incl (pensions and EmpNI)
Community Staffing (previously incl Advice)	£ 86,584.31	£ 86,584.31	£ 133,239.91	All incl (pensions and EmpNI)
Landscape and Environment Staffing (incl Envir)	£ 136,017.74	£ 136,017.74	£ 227,691.55	All incl (pensions and EmpNI)
Members Staffing	£ -	£ -	£ 25,548.09	All incl (pensions and EmpNI)
Meeting Places Staffing	£ 35,553.00	£ 35,553.00	£ 57,926.56	All incl (pensions and EmpNI)
Increments & payroll (3%)	£ 20,107.81	£ 41,833.00	£ 36,540.76	5% increase on all staff costs for 2023/24
Staffing cover	£ -	£ 25,000.00	£ 25,000.00	Potential staffing cover - could be reduced
Staffing Total	£ 715,639.22	£ 762,364.41	£ 792,356.03	
Landscape - Building costs	£ 6,600.00	£ 6,600.00	£ 3,000.00	Assuming new depot in place
Landscape - Services Budget	£ 18,000.00	£ 18,000.00	£ 18,000.00	Need clarity re: 10 year contract
Youth - Building Costs	£ 5,500.00	£ 5,500.00	£ 5,500.00	May need increase - energy
Youth - Services Budget	£ 10,000.00	£ 6,000.00	£ 8,000.00	Reduction based on HAF being accessed
Advice - Services Budget	£ 500.00	£ -	£ 500.00	
Environment - Services Budget	£ 500.00	£ 500.00	£ 1,500.00	
Community Food - Services Budget	£ -	£ -	£ 2,000.00	No budget previously - need individual cost centre
Community Development - Services Budget	£ 1,000.00	£ 1,000.00	£ 1,000.00	
Service Plan Delivery	£ 30,000.00	£ 15,000.00	£ 20,000.00	Could be 'on hold'
Emerging priorities	£ 10,000.00	£ 10,000.00	£ 10,000.00	Could be 'on hold'
Training, Development and Conferences	£ 10,000.00	£ 7,000.00	£ 8,000.00	Could reduce
Emergency Contingency	£ -	£ -	£ -	
Services Delivery Total	£ 92,100.00	£ 69,600.00	£ 77,500.00	
Depot / Landscape Investment	£ 25,000.00	£ 25,000.00	£ -	
EXPENDITURE TOTAL	£ 1,057,119.22	£ 1,111,202.41	£ 1,097,104.03	
INCOME				
Bank and Investment Interest	£ 50.00	£ 3,200.00	£ 3,200.00	£800 a quarter from CCLA
MKC LTRS Grant / Deprivation grant	£ 168,937.85	£ 168,937.85	£ 168,937.85	Updated following direction
Hire of Meeting Places	£ 40,000.00	£ 60,000.00	£ 65,000.00	
Landscape Grant (9% RTI increase on £155,846)	£ 169,872.14	£ 169,872.14	£ 189,182.87	Based on 5% uplift for 6 months and then new con
Precept	£ 631,140.74	£ 631,140.74	£ 655,622.74	
Additional Income Generation	£ 20,000.00	£ 20,000.00	£ 30,000.00	Realistic
Income Total	£ 1,030,000.73	£ 1,053,150.73	£ 1,111,943.46	
Transfer to / from reserves				£ 6,556.23
SURPLUS / DEFICIT	-£ 27,118.49	-£ 58,051.68	£ 14,839.43	
Balance carried over from 2020/21	£ 504,000.00	£ 505,000.00	£ 446,948.32	
Proposed surplus / deficit	-£ 27,118.49	-£ 58,051.68	£ 14,839.43	
End of year carry over	£ 476,881.51	£ 446,948.32	£ 461,787.75	
Notes:				
This is based upon a reduction in LCTRS over three years and a zero % increase in precept in 2023/24				
A 'safe' level of reserves is considered to be around 4 - 6 months of operating costs - between £400 - £600k for WCC				
If LCTRS is removed immediately (possible), then remove £150k from the bottom line.				

2022/23 Budget with 3 year projection

	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29
EXPENDITURE					
Affiliations	£ 5,202.00	£ 5,306.04	£ 5,412.16	£ 5,520.40	£ 5,630.81
Professional Services	£ 4,080.00	£ 4,161.60	£ 4,244.83	£ 4,329.73	£ 4,416.32
Audit Fees	£ 2,550.00	£ 2,601.00	£ 2,653.02	£ 2,706.08	£ 2,760.20
Capital Loan Repayment	£ 26,818.00	£ 26,818.00	£ 26,818.00	£ 26,818.00	
Community Events (previously Carnival)	£ 5,100.00	£ 5,202.00	£ 5,306.04	£ 5,412.16	£ 5,520.40
CLiR Ward Initiatives Fund	£ 3,800.00	£ 3,800.00	£ 3,800.00	£ 3,800.00	£ 3,800.00
Dog & Litter Bin Costs	£ 8,160.00	£ 8,323.20	£ 8,489.66	£ 8,659.46	£ 8,832.65
Meeting Costs	£ 2,040.00	£ 2,080.80	£ 2,122.42	£ 2,164.86	£ 2,208.16
Communities and Environment Fund	£ 12,000.00	£ 12,000.00	£ 12,000.00	£ 12,000.00	£ 12,000.00
Grant Aid - Res Associations	£ 3,500.00	£ 3,500.00	£ 3,500.00	£ 3,500.00	£ 3,500.00
Insurance Inc Vans	£ 9,180.00	£ 9,363.60	£ 9,550.87	£ 9,741.89	£ 9,936.73
Meeting Places (Costs)	£ 48,960.00	£ 49,939.20	£ 50,937.98	£ 51,956.74	£ 52,995.88
Member Allowances and Expenses	£ 26,520.00	£ 27,050.40	£ 27,591.41	£ 28,143.24	£ 28,706.10
Newsletters, Websites and Communications	£ 5,100.00	£ 5,202.00	£ 5,306.04	£ 5,412.16	£ 5,520.40
HQ - Building Costs (regulars)	£ 20,400.00	£ 20,808.00	£ 21,224.16	£ 21,648.64	£ 22,081.62
Vehicles	£ 9,822.60	£ 10,019.05	£ 10,219.43	£ 10,423.82	£ 10,632.30
Branding (also to include uniforms)	£ 1,020.00	£ 1,040.40	£ 1,061.21	£ 1,082.43	£ 1,104.08
Stationary and Amenities and services - HQ	£ 4,080.00	£ 4,161.60	£ 4,244.83	£ 4,329.73	£ 4,416.32
I.T (previously included broadband and Members IT)	£ 32,538.00	£ 33,188.76	£ 33,852.54	£ 34,529.59	£ 35,220.18
Organisational Costs Total	£ 230,870.60	£ 234,565.65	£ 238,334.61	£ 242,178.94	£ 219,282.16
Staffing Costs - added 2% across the board + increments					
Pension costs (20/21 = 22.1%, 21/22 = 23.6%, 22/23 = 25.1%)	5% increase	3%	2%	2%	2%
Employers NI Costs (PAYE)					
HQ Staffing	£ 198,101.47	£ 204,044.51	£ 208,125.40	£ 212,287.91	£ 216,533.67
Youth Staffing	£ 102,628.16	£ 105,707.00	£ 107,821.14	£ 109,977.56	£ 112,177.11
Community Staffing (previously incl Advice)	£ 139,901.91	£ 144,098.96	£ 146,980.94	£ 149,920.56	£ 152,918.97
Landscape and Environment Staffing (incl Envir)	£ 239,076.12	£ 246,248.41	£ 251,173.38	£ 256,196.84	£ 261,320.78
Members Staffing	£ 26,825.50	£ 27,630.26	£ 28,182.87	£ 28,746.52	£ 29,321.45
Meeting Places Staffing	£ 60,822.89	£ 62,647.57	£ 63,900.52	£ 65,178.53	£ 66,482.11
Increments & payrise (3%)	£ 38,367.80	£ 23,711.30	£ 16,123.68	£ 16,446.16	£ 16,775.08
Staffing cover	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -
Staffing Total	£ 805,723.83	£ 814,088.01	£ 822,307.93	£ 838,754.09	£ 855,529.17
Landscape - Building costs	£ 3,150.00	£ 3,307.50	£ 3,406.73	£ 3,474.86	£ 3,544.36
Landscape - Services Budget	£ 18,900.00	£ 19,845.00	£ 20,440.35	£ 20,849.16	£ 21,266.14
Youth - Building Costs	£ 5,775.00	£ 6,063.75	£ 6,245.66	£ 6,370.58	£ 6,497.99
Youth - Services Budget	£ 8,400.00	£ 8,820.00	£ 9,084.60	£ 9,266.29	£ 9,451.62
Advice - Services Budget	£ 525.00	£ 551.25	£ 567.79	£ 579.14	£ 590.73
Environment - Services Budget	£ 1,575.00	£ 1,653.75	£ 1,703.36	£ 1,737.43	£ 1,772.18
Community Food - Services Budget	£ 2,100.00	£ 2,205.00	£ 2,271.15	£ 2,316.57	£ 2,362.90
Community Development - Services Budget	£ 1,050.00	£ 1,102.50	£ 1,135.58	£ 1,158.29	£ 1,181.45
Service Plan Delivery	£ 21,000.00	£ 22,050.00	£ 22,711.50	£ 23,165.73	£ 23,629.04
Emerging priorities	£ 10,500.00	£ 11,025.00	£ 11,355.75	£ 11,582.87	£ 11,814.52
Training, Development and Conferences	£ 8,400.00	£ 8,820.00	£ 9,084.60	£ 9,266.29	£ 9,451.62
Emergency Contingency	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -
Services Delivery Total	£ 81,375.00	£ 85,443.75	£ 88,007.06	£ 89,767.20	£ 91,562.55
Depot / Landscape Investment	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -
EXPENDITURE TOTAL	£ 1,117,969.43	£ 1,134,097.42	£ 1,148,649.60	£ 1,170,700.23	£ 1,166,373.88
INCOME	5% precept	5% precept	3% precept	2% precept	2% precept
Bank and Investment Interest	£ 3,200.00	£ 3,200.00	£ 3,200.00	£ 3,200.00	£ 3,200.00
MKC LTRS Grant / Deprivation grant	£ 100,000.00	£ 50,000.00	£ -	£ -	£ -
Hire of Meeting Places	£ 75,000.00	£ 85,000.00	£ 85,000.00	£ 85,000.00	£ 85,000.00
Landscape Grant (9% RTI increase on £155,846))	£ 200,000.00	£ 210,000.00	£ 216,300.00	£ 220,626.00	£ 225,038.52
Precept	£ 688,403.88	£ 722,824.07	£ 744,508.79	£ 759,398.97	£ 774,586.95
Additional Income Generation	£ 40,000.00	£ 40,000.00	£ 40,000.00	£ 40,000.00	£ 40,000.00
Income Total	£ 1,106,603.88	£ 1,111,024.07	£ 1,089,008.79	£ 1,108,224.97	£ 1,127,825.47
Transfer to / from reserves	1% increase				
SURPLUS / DEFICIT	-£ 11,365.56	-£ 23,073.35	-£ 59,640.81	-£ 62,475.26	-£ 38,548.41
Balance carried over from 2020/21	£ 461,787.75	£ 450,422.20	£ 427,348.85	£ 367,708.04	£ 305,232.78
Proposed surplus / deficit	-£ 11,365.56	-£ 23,073.35	-£ 59,640.81	-£ 62,475.26	-£ 38,548.41
End of year carry over	£ 450,422.20	£ 427,348.85	£ 367,708.04	£ 305,232.78	£ 266,684.37
Notes:					
This is based upon a reduction in LCTRS over three years and a zero % increase in precept in 2023/24					
A 'safe' level of reserves is considered to be around 4 - 6 months of operating costs - between £400 - £600k for WCC					
If LCTRS is removed immediately (possible), then remove £150k from the bottom line.					

Agenda item: FC 148/22

WOUGHTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Full Council

Monday 12th December 2022

PURPOSE OF REPORT:

To update council on Survey Feedback for consideration when doing service and budget planning.

RECOMMENDATION:

- 1. That council notes the report and feedback offered.**
- 2. That council considers this feedback when planning focus for both the coming winter and the coming year, both in terms of service provision and budgets.**
- 3. That council considers a return to a more general priorities survey from March 2023, running through until September 2023, to gain a fuller picture of priorities for residents.**

MAIN ISSUES AND CONSIDERATIONS:

The annual 'priorities survey' was, this year, agreed to be focused on the Cost of Living crisis, with questions focused on trying to gain an idea of what residents feel the council should prioritise over the coming winter. Whilst there has been some feedback that sits outside this, the majority has been in response to questions posed specifically around cost of living and as such, using this feedback for more general service and budget planning may be difficult. However, the feedback is excellent in terms of planning for any support over the coming months – this links nicely to another paper about 'winter programme' that is also being discussed within this meeting.

Feedback at date of writing this paper included a total of 153 responses (126 responses at the past paper) which were fairly representative of the seen estates of the parish. Respondents stated that the estate they lived on was:

▼ Peartree Bridge	12.42%	19
▼ Leadenhall	4.58%	7
▼ Eaglestone	9.15%	14
▼ Coffee Hall	13.07%	20
▼ Beanhill	18.95%	29
▼ Netherfield	24.18%	37
▼ Tinkers Bridge	17.65%	27
▼ Redmoor	0.00%	0
▼ Bleak Hall	0.00%	0
TOTAL		153

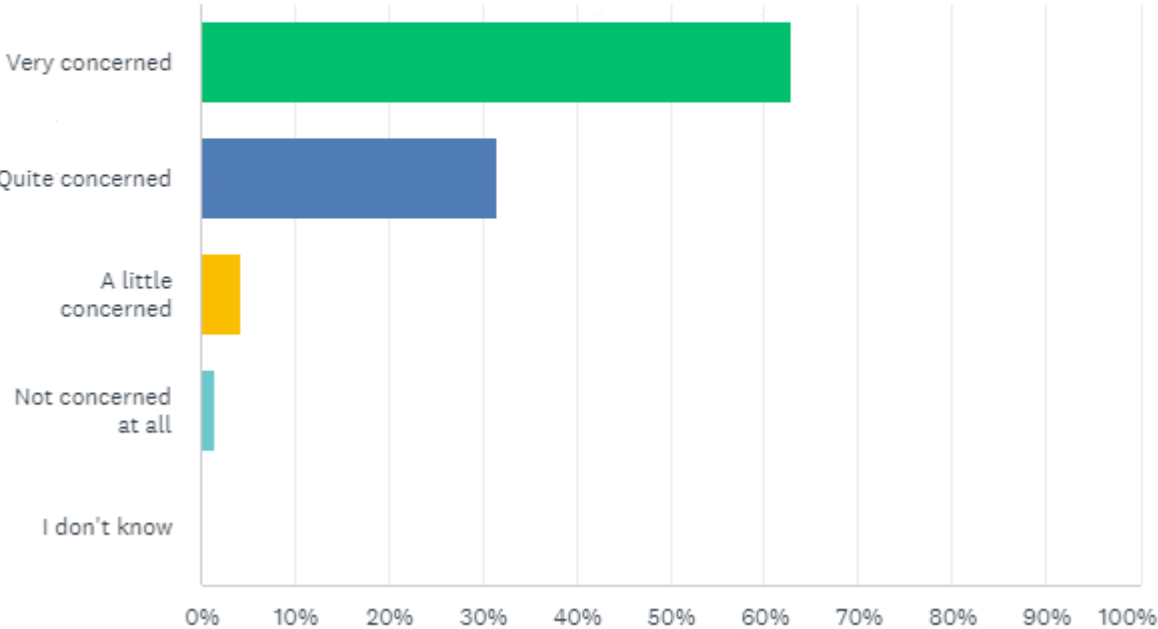
The respondents were split in terms of their employment status too.

▼ Working full-time (inside or outside the home)	23.18%	35
▼ Working part-time	21.19%	32
▼ Unemployed	30.46%	46
▼ Student/in education	1.32%	2
▼ Retired	23.84%	36
TOTAL		151

Almost everyone considered the cost-of-living situation cause for concern:

How concerned are you about the current cost of living crisis?

Answered: 143 Skipped: 10

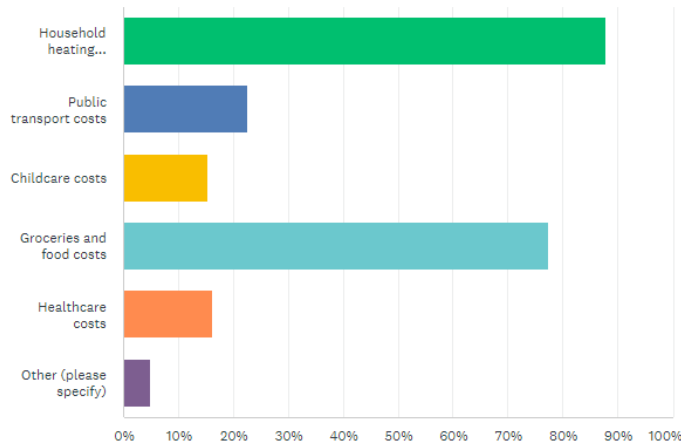


94.5% of respondents said that they were quite or very concerned about the situation. This hasn't shifted much since last time.

The biggest concerns were unsurprising, with food and utilities the biggest worries, as they were at the time of writing the previous paper:

Which (if any) rises in the cost of living are causing you the most concern/negative impact? Please tick all that apply

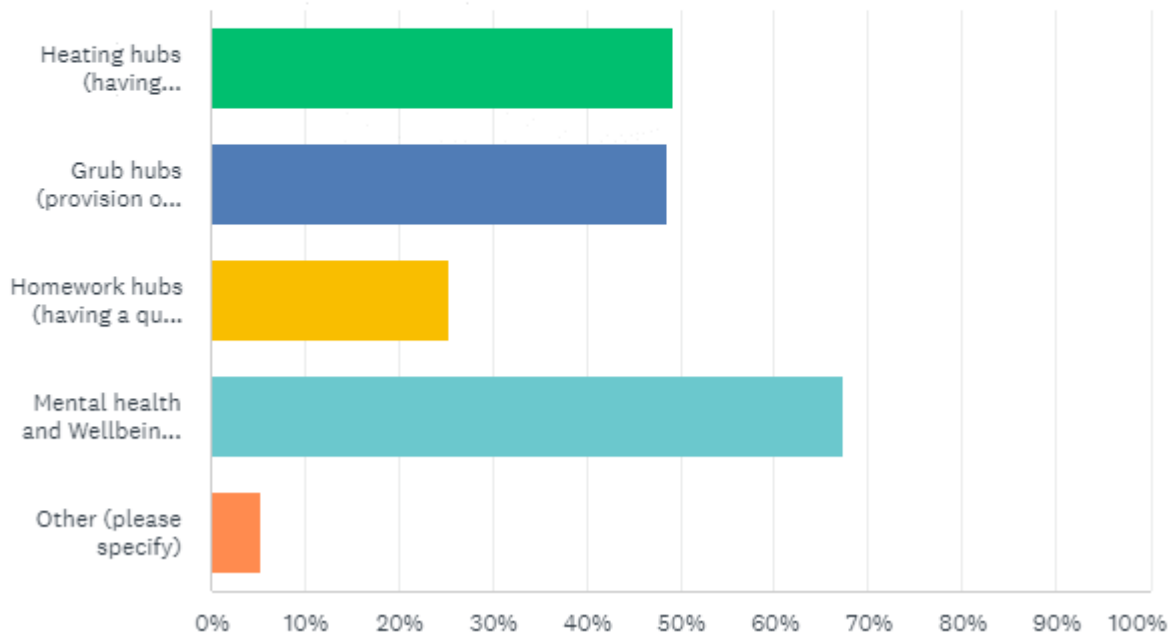
Answered: 124 Skipped: 2



One of the more surprising results was the things that people want to see WCC provide, with mental health and wellbeing support the biggest one, but closely followed by the heating and grub hubs. Grub hubs has been the area with the highest increase since the last paper.

Which areas do you feel you will need the most support with over the coming year? (please only select a maximum of 3)

Answered: 150 Skipped: 3

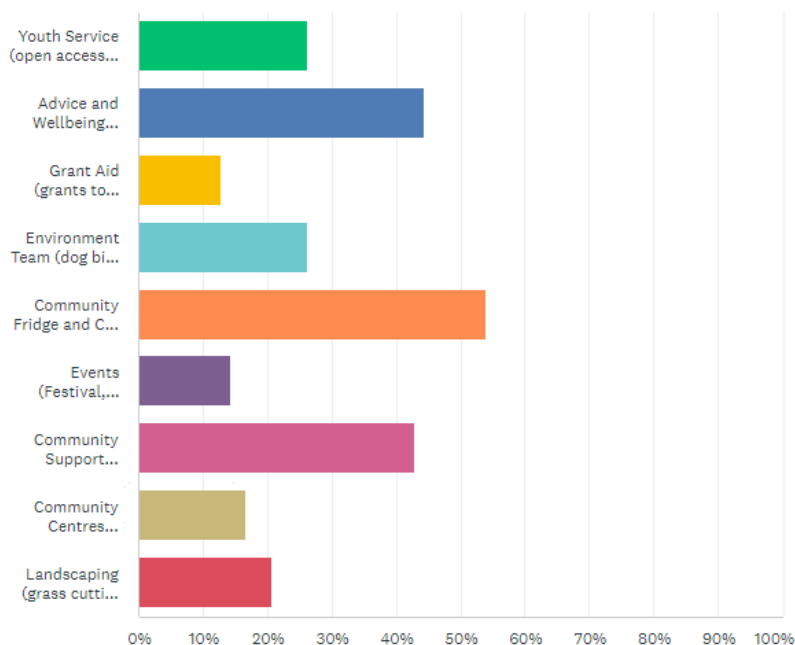


One area that will contribute to the longer-term planning is the question around which services are most important. It is noticeable that this year, with the question specific to the cost of living issue, that the priorities have changed; community food remains top (in part due to the number of responses from people attending those sessions), with advice, community support coming out on top, with youth, environment and landscaping also valued. Grants, events and community centres finished towards the bottom. It should be noted that people could choose up to three on this question.

These haven't changed since last time.

Please tick the THREE most important services that you feel would be most useful to the wider community based on the cost of living crisis occurring at this time.

Answered: 126 Skipped: 0



Alongside these statistical responses, there were also a number of written comments, varying from very positive to very condemning. There were also comments about what might help that fall way outside the remit of WCC – levels of benefits, council tax funding policies, housing repairs, costs and improvements and fining people for dropping litter are all areas that council may wish to comment on but have no power to change.

Positive comments included many people commending the fridge and café, suggestions that could extend the hours to enable more people to access and the idea that provision of heating and food ‘hubs’ could be hugely beneficial.

Negative comments included a view that all this was pointless, that WCC is a ‘thieving lot’ who steal the food from people’s mouths whilst feathering our nests and topping up our pension pots and a recommendation that we should freeze the parish

precept. One comment also suggested that we only focus on youths and ignore pensioners.

There were also some comments about wider issues, such as

“The cost of living crisis has not badly affected me at the moment. I am more concerned about the environmental crises. We will all have to suffer to put things on a better track for the natural environment, but few are prepared to.” This was echoed by a suggestion that we should focus on rewilding areas and focusing on plant based food initiatives.

This feedback, whilst limited, suggests that ensuring that there is access to mental health support, warm spaces and food for those that need it would be welcomed. In terms of longer term, the services that are provided are seen as valuable in terms of the cost of living stuff, but some were valued more highly than others (grants, community centres and events came lowest but may reflect the impact on cost of living, rather than wider value).

STAFFING IMPLICATIONS:

None perceived.

OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Given the focus on cost of living with this survey, it is recommended that during 2023, a fuller, more in depth survey is undertaken to try and gather views on long term views for the parish. This could take a similar approach to the current survey, but with a more general tone to questions and a request for contact details for follow up questions for those that are happy to do so. This would and could help focus the work around long term service planning and budgeting.

BACKGROUND PAPERS:

None.

AUTHOR

Steve McNay – Council Manager

Agenda item: FC 149/22

WOUGHTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Full Council

Monday 12th December 2022

PURPOSE OF REPORT:

To inform the council of the outcome of the Internal Audit, to confirm the external auditor for the coming 5 years and to recommend remaining with Auditing Solutions for the 2023/24 council year.

RECOMMENDATION:

1. That council notes the Internal Auditors report.
2. That council agrees to retain Auditing Solutions for internal auditing for the coming council year (2023/24).
3. That the council notes that PKF Littlejohn have been appointed by the Smaller Authorities Audit Authority (SAAA) for external auditing purpose for the local council sector for the next five (5) years and that WCC continue to use this scheme for external auditing.

MAIN ISSUES AND CONSIDERATIONS:

Each year, as part of the governance checks and balances, WCC has two internal and one external audit, which lead to the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) and oversight.

The interim audit, undertaken around October / November has been undertaken by Auditing Solutions Ltd (the company that has undertaken internal audits for the past few years) and has come back with nothing noted as a concern – a ‘clean’ audit. Thanks are due to Marta, Samone and others for ensuring that all was in place for this. This report is attached.

It is recommended that, in the absence of an RFO currently, that we ‘roll over’ the agreement with Auditing Solutions and continue to appoint them to undertake internal auditing of WCC for the coming year. It may be helpful to consider a review in 2024/25, but the Council Manager is aware that there is a lack of suitable auditing capacity within the sector and Auditing Solutions have always been efficient, helpful and reasonably priced.

In addition to the internal audit, there is also an annual external audit. This can be with any suitably qualified auditor, but the sector appoints agreed auditors at agreed fees, which tend to be more effective and affordable.

Smaller Authorities Audit Appointments (SAAA) is the independent, sector led organisation responsible for the appointment and contract management of external auditors to smaller authorities since the Local Audit and Accountability Act 2014 established new arrangements for the accountability and audit of local public bodies

in England. Smaller authorities are those whose gross annual income or expenditure is **less than £6.5 million**.

Under the Local Audit (Smaller Authorities) Regulations 2015, SAAA is responsible for appointing external auditors to all opted-in smaller authorities, for setting the terms of appointment for limited assurance reviews and for managing the contracts with the appointed audit firms.

SAAA has appointed an external auditor to the authority for the 5-year appointing period from 2022-23 until 2026-2, following a procurement exercise to appoint auditors to each contract area from 1 April 2022. For Buckinghamshire, this will be PKF Littlejohn (this is the same company that has been delivering this service for the past few years – as with Auditing Solutions, they have provided a service that fits with sector demands, is more affordable than others (due to the SAAA agreement) and ensures that WCC meets its obligations).

It is recommended that WCC uses this scheme for external auditing.

Auditing continues to be an essential element of governance within the sector and within WCC. This process, with the two organisations noted, provide reassurance internally, externally and for residents that WCC is acting lawfully, effectively and within the best interests and financial constraints necessary.

STAFFING IMPLICATIONS:

None noted.

OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

None.

BACKGROUND PAPERS:

Woughton CC Interim report 2022-23

AUTHOR

Steve McNay – Council Manager

Agenda item: FC 150/22

WOUGHTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Full Council

Monday 12th December 2022

PURPOSE OF REPORT:

To update council on Eaglestone Activity Centre (EAC) and the proposed transfer.

RECOMMENDATION:

- 1. That council notes this report, previous discussions and the attached 'Heads of Terms'.**
- 2. That council agrees to this proposal and works with MKCC to arrange a formal transfer.**
- 3. That council includes EAC within the Community Centre Improvement project (NB this is already in place, but was considered a possible).**
- 4. That after 5 years, the council reviews continuing involvement with EAC.**

MAIN ISSUES AND CONSIDERATIONS:

WCC has been managing Eaglestone Activity Centre (EAC) for several years, without any formal agreement in place. Discussions have been ongoing for a number of years with regard to formalising the agreement, with a 'transfer' on a long term lease proposed by MKCC. WCC has concerns about the potential for significant financial liabilities and, as a result, has declined the offer to this point.

The last paper that was presented to council proposed that an agreement with a 'break clause', allowing WCC to pass the building back in the event that it becomes unaffordable be included. This was proposed to MKCC who have now included this and requested WCC agreement to progress this.

This clause enables WCC to give 12months notice at any point after the first 5 years. This links to the MKCC clause that allows them to give 12 months notice for any redevelopment.

This is a route that allows a level of security for both parties and appears a reasonable compromise.

STAFFING IMPLICATIONS:

None.

OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

None.

BACKGROUND PAPERS:

Heads of Terms Eaglestone Community Centre v3 Nov 2022

AUTHOR

Steve McNay – Council Manager

Heads of Terms



PROPOSED LEASE

Premises:	Eaglestone Community Centre & Play Area Harrier Court Milton Keynes MK6 5BZ
Landlord:	Milton Keynes City Council Civic Offices Saxon Gate East Milton Keynes MK9 3EJ
Tenant:	Woughton Community Council 33-37 Farthing Grove Netherfield Milton Keynes MK6 4JH
Rent:	£1 per annum if demanded
Rent Deposit	Not Applicable
Guarantor/Surety:	Not Applicable
Term:	25 years
Break Options:	Landlord redevelopment break on 12 months notice Tenant break notice of 12 months to be served after year 5.
Security of Tenure:	The lease is to be contracted out of the security of tenure provisions of the Landlord & Tenant Act 1954
Rent Reviews:	None
Sub-letting and assignment:	Assignment, as a whole permitted with landlords consent only to a successor authority or organisations provide community use subject to landlord consent Subletting of part permitted with landlords consent The tenant will be permitted to allow organisations to rent space within the premises providing they can demonstrate that they are offering a service to the community on a not for profit basis. The tenant must inform the landlord of all organisations using the building, prior to their use, and the terms of their use. Provided a landlord and tenant relationship is not created in the event tenancy arrangement is to be created the Landlord is to be notified.
Service charge:	Yes

Statutory Compliance.	The tenant will be responsible for complying with all statutory requirements, including but not limited to health and safety, planning, food hygiene (if applicable) PAT etc.
Repairs & Decoration:	Full Repairing Lease Tenant Responsible for all works The tenant is responsible for all repairs to the building and for maintaining internal and external decoration. For the avoidance of doubt this will include the external play area/court and all boundary features.
Alterations:	Internal non-structural Permitted External and structural alterations will require landlord consent. Licence for Alterations will be required.
Permitted Use:	Community use and ancillary offices as updated under Planning Use Classes Order.
Insurance:	Landlord to insure building and recover in part from the tenant Tenant to have Contents Insurance, Business Insurance and Liability Insurance
Rates/Utilities/other outgoings:	Tenant
Other terms:	As per the lease. Inform the landlord of the emergency key holder Ensure that safeguarding policies and processes are in place for all children and young people using the building
Rights reserved:	TBC
Rights granted:	TBC
Costs:	Tenant to pay Council Legal fees and Surveyors Fees in the region of £1,500 plus vat where applicable.
Conditions:	Subject to Formal Council Approval
Landlord's Solicitors:	Legal Services Civic Milton Keynes Council Saxon Gate East Milton Keynes MK9 3EJ
Tenant's Solicitors:	TBC
Tenants Acceptance:	

Agenda item: FC 151/22

WOUGHTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Full Council

Monday 12th December 2022

PURPOSE OF REPORT:

To propose the replacement of two (2) water dispensers at the Hub and the installation of a further dispenser within the café space.

RECOMMENDATION:

- 1. That council considers the replacement of the existing dispensers.**
- 2. That council considers the installation of a water dispenser within the Community Café kitchen.**
- 3. That installation of similar systems within all Community Centres is included as part of any refurbishment project.**

MAIN ISSUES AND CONSIDERATIONS:

There are two hot water dispensers within the Hub that have both stopped working. We have had them checked and they are both burned out and need replacing / removing.

In addition, provision of hot water dispensers within our community buildings has been spoken about for several years. Whilst work continues in terms of a broader improvement programme, installation of a dispenser within the community café space would be extremely useful.

They are not cheap, with the quote being around £1000 per unit – this does include additional work around fitting (raising the existing ones to enable filling of flasks) and the units cost around £800 each.

An alternative option could be that one is replaced within the Hub, with the other being removed / replaced at a later date.

This issue was raised within the Council Managers report at the last meeting, but with quotes now in place and the proposal for an additional unit, agreement in full can now happen.

STAFFING IMPLICATIONS:

None.

OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

None.

BACKGROUND PAPERS:

Hot water dispensers quote.

AUTHOR

Steve McNay – Council Manager

Agenda item: FC 152/22

WOUGHTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Full Council

Monday 12th December 2022

PURPOSE OF REPORT:

Woughton 'winter programme' update.

RECOMMENDATION:

- 1. That council notes this report and associated papers.**
- 2. That council considers the proposals and ideas and adds any additional suggestions.**
- 3. That the Community Services Manager, Council Manager, Community Development Officer and others continue to develop ideas, working with partner organisations where possible.**
- 4. That council agrees to payment of additional hours to officers if needed to extend the delivery out of hours and only where existing hours are insufficient to cover.**
- 5. That council agrees to provide small amounts of funding (under £500) to support this delivery, utilising the grant via MKCC, payable to partners where appropriate.**

MAIN ISSUES AND CONSIDERATIONS:

Following the last Full Council meeting, further discussions and contacts have been made to extend the programme around 'warm rooms' and similar approaches, to support people across the parish over the winter months. Due to the pressures on time at the last meeting, there was limited discussion or agreement from council with regard to the specifics. This paper aims to build upon those early discussions, clarifying the current proposal and asking for any further considerations from councillors.

WCC was awarded a sum from MKCC to support the extension of 'warm rooms', with a focus on providing warm spaces and food. For some other councils, this has simply been to open a room and allow people access. WCC discussions suggested that a more inclusive and innovative approach would be preferred, with activities and a diverse range of options available.

Current provision includes the community cafes (Coffee Hall, Eaglestone, Tinkers Bridge), Games Night(s), youth service offer and some existing provision within the churches / family centres (separate from WCC, but part of the 'parish offer').

Proposals for new sessions include:

- Extending hours on café sessions at Christ the Vine, with volunteer support and additional funding

- A new session on Monday afternoons at Netherfield, covering the 'school run' and leading into the youth session
- Extending the hours at Eaglestone Café into the evening with additional support from WCC
- A new session that has already started at Tinkers Bridge on a Thursday evening
- A new art class session at Coffee Hall, run by a volunteer with support from WCC
- A 'slow cooker course' run by Lisa Lovell at a venue to be confirmed (Netherfield is suggested)
- Community Cinema evenings at all venues (ideas for films being discussed online).

Additional hours where spaces are open, especially where there is existing staffing in place, could also happen relatively easily (e.g. extending hours of the cafes beyond 2pm).

Some spending has already taken place, with a portable cinema screen, games and planning for spending to ensure all centres have kitchen equipment.

Any other ideas, ideas for volunteers or additional staffing support or proposals for different activities would be welcome to be included for future delivery.

STAFFING IMPLICATIONS:

There may be some need for additional officer support, especially where delivery sits outside out usual delivery hours. This may be able to be covered by officers working more flexibly, but, as has been noted previously, additional delivery means that additional resources may be needed. Some officers have agreed that additional hours would be possible, but not within existing hours (e.g. part time hours currently used but could extend with extra hours). It is recommended that additional hours could be paid specifically for this delivery, utilising the additional funding available.

OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

None.

BACKGROUND PAPERS:

Warm Room Activities.

AUTHOR

Steve McNay – Council Manager

Venue	Day	Time	Duration (Hrs)	Project	New/Existing?	Who?	What's needed?	Cost
Christ the Vine	Monday	2pm-4pm	2	Extend café hours	New	CTV volunteers (plus CH cooks?)	Food, refreshments	£20 per session
Netherfield	Monday	2.30pm-4.30pm	2	Pre Youth Group session	New	SR/Volunteers	Food, refreshments	£10 per session
Netherfield	Monday	5pm-7pm	2	Youth Group 9-18yrs	Existing	Youth	Cooking equipment needed, then food	£30 setup then £10 per session
Beanhill	TBC	TBC	TBC	Quiz/Bingo	Existing	BHRA, FOM	TBC	TBC
No 95	Tuesday	4pm-5.30pm	1.5	Youth Group 12-19yrs	Existing	Youth	Cooking equipment needed, then food	£30 setup then £10 per session
Eaglestone Café	Wednesday	TBC	TBC	Extend café hours past 5pm	New	RA, Abbafather	TBC	TBC
Coffee Hall Games Night	Every other Wednesday	6.30pm-8.30pm	2	Games Night	Existing	Friends of Coffee Hall	Board games	£75
Tinkers Bridge	Wednesday	3.15pm-4.45pm	1.5	Youth Group 10-14yrs	Existing	Youth	Cooking equipment needed, then food	£30 setup then £10 per session
Tinkers Bridge	Thursday	5pm-7.30pm	2.5	Cooked dinners	New	RA	Cooking equipment needed, then food	TBC
Coffee Hall	Thursday	TBC	1.5	Art Class (Eileen)	New	Eileen (Jonathans Court)	Materials, refreshments	£30-£50 per session + refreshments
No 95	Thursday	12.30pm-2pm	1.5	Young parents group 13-25yrs	Existing	Youth	Food mainly (fruit)	£5 per session
Eaglestone	Thursday	3.15pm-4.30pm	1.25	Youth Group 8-12yrs	Existing	Youth	Food, refreshments	£10 per session
Eaglestone	Thursday	4.45pm-5.45pm	1	Youth 13-19yrs	Existing	Youth	Food, refreshments	£10 per session
Christ the Vine	Friday	2pm-4pm	2	Extend café hours	New	CtV Volunteers (plus CH cooks?)	Food, refreshments	£20 per session
Netherfield?	Friday	TBC	4	Slow cooker course	New	LL, Volunteers, Officers	TBC	£140 per session up to 8 attendees
All venues	TBC	Evenings	3 (est)	Community Cinema	New	KV/SP	Screen/Licence/food/refreshments	Screen = £75. Films from £80